

Neighborhood Business District Strategy

Public Comments from Six Public Forums

June 2004

Meeting Schedule:

- **June 8, 2004:** Admiral, Alki, Delridge, Highland Park, Morgan Junction, South Park, West Seattle Junction, Westwood
- **June 9, 2004:** Beacon Hill, Columbia City, Georgetown, MLK@Holly, North Rainier, Rainier Beach, Rainier Valley
- **June 14, 2004:** Fremont, Green Lake, Ravenna, Roosevelt, University, Wallingford
- **June 15, 2004:** Capitol Hill, Central Area, Eastlake, First Hill, Madison Park, Madison-Miller, Pike/Pine, Queen Anne, South Lake Union, Uptown
- **June 21, 2004:** Aurora-Licton Springs, Bitter Lake, Lake City, Northgate
- **June 22, 2004:** Ballard, Crown Hill, Greenwood-Phinney Ridge, Magnolia

Public Comment Topics:

- Question 1: What elements/features help make a pedestrian-friendly street front?
 - Question 2: What parts of your neighborhood are the "retail cores" or pedestrian-friendly "main street" retail or commercial areas? If not present now, where should they be?
 - Question 3: What elements/features might be different inside or outside the "retail core"? What elements/features are critical, and which are helpful?
 - Question 4: How can auto-oriented zones be safer and more pleasant?
 - Other/General Comments
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Question 1: What elements/features help make a pedestrian-friendly street front?

South Park

- wide, clean streets
- safe from street traffic
- easy access to public transit
- traffic calming design/device
- Something between street/sidewalk – on street parking?
- *new homes in south park last 5-10 years
- thinking about need for parking – behind comm. Parcels in N. Plan

Wallingford/Other N. Central Neighborhoods

- Wider sidewalks/sidewalk cafes
- On-street parking
- Slow-moving traffic
- Trees, pedestrian street crossings and navigation
- Street furniture
- Active uses consistent vs. "dead space"
- Small-scale uses vs. block-long uses
- Some office uses ok --
Example: dental office, well-designed professional office with windows
- Open space for community events and gathering spaces; places to sit and linger, think about different mobility needs.
- Awnings
- Safe, clean within commercial district and behind/beyond trash cans
- Institutions, businesses where perhaps interact with the community "non-insular"
- On-street parking that is not usurped by traffic lanes
- Variation on face of single grocery store.
Example: 23rd & John, Small retail @ street front
- Area-side plan for parking vs. block-block
Example: School – how institutions and businesses impact parking and traffic
- Don't do:
 - Driveways that cross sidewalks
 - Parking lots between building and street
 - Parking lots on corner. Take special care with corners, intersections.
Example: Greenwood
- Impacts of shadows; limit height of buildings on south side of street to retain light to street frontage
- Step back on upper stories to avoid tight corridors
- Consider issue of transient activity

Columbia City, MLK @ Holly, Hillman City

- Awnings
- Diverse business
- No garbage (sight, smell)
- Continuous storefronts
- Diagonal on-site parking – puts cars (moving) further from pedestrians
- Less crime
- Sidewalks
- Transparency
- Don't limit pedestrian amenities to a strip
- Appropriate signage at corner to get business on side streets noticed
- Centrally located parking

- Shared parking

NW Seattle: Lake City, Aurora, Bitter Lake

- Overhangs/awnings
- Curbs –protect from cars
- Keep cars off sidewalk with curbs
- Need room for trees
- Slow down traffic
- More pleasant to walk
- Provide rain protection
- Greenwood is getting benches – need to keep from sleepers
- Kiosks –125th and Greenwood
- Segmented businesses – small scale, lots of poor
- No blank facades (Fred Meyer in Lake City)
- Design review needs to have more input
- Sidewalk cafes
- SDOT has permit fees for awning (street-use) – DPD – if lettering is on sign
- Walking pathways, protected – continuous, connecting with bus
- Parking behind buildings impinges on neighborhoods
- Need to retain buffers
- No path from 130th to 125th on Aurora
- No path on Linden N. from reservoir
- Designated pedestrian path needed
- Signal at 125th and Greenwood crosswalk needs to be re-looked at
- Need more time for pedestrians
- Reduce speeding on Greenwood
- Need place to walk
- Different times of day – peak hour, mid-day, weekdays, weekends

Crown Hill

- Safety (lack there of) – dodging columns, traffic safety
- People parking in the neighborhood that are strangers
- See the monorail as taking away the goals of NBDS vision.
- Nice idea to not have p/r but unrealistic. Don't want to see big asphalt lot.
Maybe small lots, landscaped
- 15th Ave. N.W. vision document
- Grocery store/sharing parking tie to the advantage card to allow p/r in the Safeway/QFC
- Don't see 15th/Crown Hill as a pedestrian friendly area like Madison crossing – 15th Ave. as a barrier

Magnolia

- Variety of activity, restaurants, retail
- Not against architecture or dentists offices at ground-level

- Great to have diversity
- Signage provides visual stimulus. Use guidelines to get better quality, well lit, made signs (not cardboard, for example), even if big
- Lighting – important for evening, ambience
- Mixed-use, with residential above help create 24-hour places

Ballard

- Wide sidewalks
- Storefronts
- Awnings – weather protection/light.
- Limited curb cut
- Street furniture
- Bike racks
- 24 hr. activity – residents, office workers, commercial, tourists
- Clean, safe environments
- Pedestrian friendly design not necessarily what retail needs;
- Pedestrian activation vs. pedestrian friendly street fronts
- Difference between retail use and pedestrian friendly environment
- Can parking for the public be an incentive for developers in design review/variances?
- Use of street right-of-way is key – street front cafes, display space, sandwich boards
- Good design is different than activating pedestrian space
- Office use/employee base
 - Examples – Matador, Market (22nd – 24th)
- 24 hr. use – resident/office/commercial/tourist

Madison Miller/Madison Park/Madrona

- No curbcuts
- If street is used as arterial – full of cars going somewhere else, makes it not pedestrian friendly.
 - Trouble with curbcut location
 - On arterials – too much traffic
- On residential = cut through traffic
- What can we do to slow vehicle traffic?
- More crosswalks

Georgetown/Beacon Hill

Pedestrian Features:

- Awnings
- Benches
- Architecture/includes historic architecture
- Wider sidewalks
- Pocket parks/Open space
- Convenient Pedestrian Crossings

- Bulb-outs
- Medians
- Greenery
- Trees
- Parkways
- One-street parking
- Sidewalk use
- Cafes

Morgan and West Seattle Junctions

Things that work:

- U-Village
 - Construction quality
 - Landscaping – continuous
 - Open spaces/layout
 - Diversity of shape/height
 - Limited vehicular access
 - Pedestrian walkways
 - Parking is less stressful
- Green Lake Plaza
- Mix of uses – service, retail, residential → diverse services, quality of life services
- Pedestrian plazas/open spaces
- Wide sidewalks
- Bulb outs
- On-street parking as buffer
- Street trees + furniture – benches (Admiral)
- Public art on sidewalks
- Mid-block crossings
- No more than one land each way – gives proximity
- Awnings – don't charge fees for awnings & signage to encourage quality
- Sidewalk cafes
- All-way cross
- More residential in areas (mixed-use?)
- Hierarchy of pedestrian spaces
- Continuity of retail
- 2-floors commercial/retail, then residential
- Mid-block connections
- Responsible leasing by property owners
- Building height = less than 40 feet at street-front
- Attractive signage
- Transparent
- Quality construction

Westwood/Delridge

- Sidewalks – wider
- Traffic calming/mitigation
- Crosswalks – a little more than average striped
- Narrower streets
- Ped signalization
- Less traffic volume
- Channeling cars
- Things that make street interesting
- No parking in front of businesses (between building and sidewalk)
- Art
- Landscaping
- Benches
- Pedestrian-scaled lighting
- Bus shelters
- Restaurants, bars, cafes, services, doctors, travel agents
- Some lighter industrial too
- Use is important – want pedestrian activity 24/7
- Want retail at ground level; doctors can go upstairs
- Current code: adding patio to new restaurant resulted in higher parking requirements, results in awkward space in front. Our neighborhood needs activity.
- Waiver would be great – want to encourage outdoor dining

Question 2: What parts of your neighborhood are the “retail cores” or pedestrian-friendly “main street” retail or commercial areas? If not present now, where should they be?

Wallingford/Other N. Central Neighborhoods

- Roosevelt
- Look at Neighborhood Plan
- QFC site
- Overall, retain existing requirements
- Ground-level retail becomes “incubator” space
- Retail/commercial needs depth (vs. strips)
- Look at different sites of block and how they relate to each other
- Residential roughly equidistance between commercial nodes
- Use neighborhood plan; combine with economics data
- Need small and medium size of businesses; discourage large businesses in pedestrian areas

Capitol Hill/First Hill/Queen Anne/Central Area/Eastlake

- You keep saying encourage – why can’t you mandate all of these things?
“Someone needs to run the show”
- Question about Metro Transit Rt. #’s
- Widened street - other problems
- Same woman as CNPS contact
- Question about trees: how close do they/can they be to the curb edge?
- Wider sidewalks – what would be the incentive to get them to do it? A: If we let go of the 64 percent requirement, then they get to build more on top and do the setback
- The upper story 64 percent requirement is the most common topic in design review
(Madison, Miller, Andrew)
- Is this something we are looking at here? Yes, more flexibility w/o going higher
- Developer – small lots, very difficult to build w/so many restrictions (so much parking, trees, sidewalks, etc.) Can’t build, so don’t
- Need to be careful about what we ask
- “As a developer, I have problems too. All these restrictions on a small lot. I can’t build the building you want me to build”

Crown Hill

- What can we do w/Transit Way and Art program, MRP, etc.? Should there be art programs for the columns?
- What impact will switches have? Underneath columns/guide way/switches/dark, so what are solutions?
- Lighting (band aid on gashing wound?) (elderly women walking along)

- Column art tile C./ID pillars
- Enhancing storefronts
- Look at one-way streets in residential area – 2-side parking makes people pull over – is it better to be slowed, inconvenient vs. faster speeds
- Slowing traffic to make it too much of a hassle
- Make it hard for them to drive to stations, park around
- Traffic circle needs – crossing 15th Ave
- Wide sidewalks, difficult with column placement

Ballard

(West Market – 24th to Locks)

- Industrial zone w/new retail
- No streetscape now
- Good re-development potential

(Leary)

- Market –20th to 15th – focused on hospital
- Ballard municipal zone – standards in place through design review
 - Mid block passages for height
 - 56th is parking lots – 57th potential
 - Parking – shared use
 - Parking for public as a design review trade-off

Miller Park

- Seems well defined zoning now

Madison Park

- Don't have blight area between commercial – residential areas
- Don't want to define the commercial area beyond what it is now

Westwood/Delridge

- Want more pedestrian-friendly mixed-use development
- South Delridge triangle might benefit from a pedestrian designation
- Consider future rezones that offer a more graduated transition from commercial to multifamily to single family, with an eye toward “natural buffers” (busy street, for example)
- Currently there is a lot of commercial to single family (transition) which discourages developers from pursuing higher density housing due to single family concerns about height and density
- So little commercially-zoned property in this area, does not make sense to allow liberal use of non-commercial (or business/office) uses at the street level
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- **Question 3: What elements/features might be different inside or outside the “retail core”? What elements/features are critical, and which are helpful?**

Wallingford/Other N. Central Neighborhoods

- Transit stops
- Meaningful public participation throughout development process
- Crosswalks
- Bike facilities in central locations
- Residential uses are easier for property owners to manage
- Nodes needs bigger footprints than residential or strip commercial to accommodate diversity of businesses
- Interior design critical for utility of commercial spaces
- Parking access often takes space used for retail

Crown Hill

- Where does retail need to be? At the intersection north and south of 85th? (one block)
- Office (like doctor's) – 87th - Holman Rd. - 12th
- Retail - 70th – /15th
- Like having doctor/insurance near retail – contributes to the local town feel
- Why should we put energy creating positive environment along 15th Av NW w/ the monorail guideway?
- Need sensitivity that one block off 15th is so very quiet, listening to birds, morning coffee on the porch – terrified of losing this sense
- What do we want to see south of 80th/north of 70th? Park in residential development, more bike racks
- Upset running alignment on west side of street; should be down middle

Magnolia

- Encourage restaurants
- Incentives for developers to provide public parking
- Each urban village should have its own parking structure

Ballard

- Clean, safe environments
- Wide sidewalks
- Street trees/furniture
- Minimize curb cuts, parking access
- Street cafes – taking down barriers?
- Use of street row.
 - sandwich boards

Beacon Hill

- Ability to walk, protected from elements
- Benches
- Pocket parks
- Redo facades, sidewalks (on Beacon)
- How do you encourage businesses that have been there to upgrade?
- Ground floor retail – need incentive to take “risk”
- Transit – 36 is great on Beacon
- Awnings – incentives to add (vs. encouraging or requiring)
- Loans?
- Grants?
- Existing parking spaces in alleys – pave, encourage use
- Beacon: under-served area – need the info on incentives
- HUB zones – info on available property

Question 4: How can auto-oriented zones be safer and more pleasant?

Wallingford/Other N. Central Neighborhoods

- Shouldn't be "auto-oriented" zones
- Policy-level: Don't actively encourage big-box retail; maximum size of use
- Sidewalks with buffers along all transit corridors – pleasant walking
- Nodes within major development, such as shopping centers
- Pedestrian walkways between internal nodes/stores
- Align entrances with street grid
- Basic pedestrian amenities: trees, pedestrian-scale lighting, just as important in C-zones as in NC-zones
- Understand pedestrian patterns
Example: People don't walk across Aurora – people tend to walk to Aurora from residential areas and back
- Policy: Adhere to University Village Master Plan and Neighborhood Plan
- Policy: Invest in street trees on arterials

Columbia City, MLK @ Holly, Hillman City

- Limit truck access
- Curbs and sidewalks in appropriate places
- Reduce speeds
- Neck-down street width
- Slow/calm downhill traffic
- Shared parking

NW Seattle: Lake City, Aurora, Bitter Lake

- Sidewalks
- Continuous pedestrian path along Aurora
- Sidewalks in west side streets
- Ways to get through zones without walking along LC Way - get developers thinking together
- Protect pedestrian walkways from parking
- Allow pedestrian gathering spots
- 5th Ave. NE./15th/Roosevelt Way N.E. Traffic moves a lot faster than on Queen Anne Ave. – can you slow traffic in retail areas?
- Pedestrian access through auto-oriented commercial area and to big-box retail
- Need continuous pedestrian walkways
- Need to pay attention to noise/pollution along arterials, impacts on residents
- Rick's doesn't have parking and people are parking on the sidewalks and impacting neighborhoods
- Soften appearance of concrete – Albertson's at 130th – is good one block west – could be softened – currently cars

- More police officers
- Better lighting / better walkways
- Provide drainage around a bus stop
- 130th – 132nd – Puddles on Greenwood Ave. N

Crown Hill

- Small group – couldn't hear many comments though on my side of table
- Crossing 15th - and huge gaps between crosswalks
- Lack of pedestrian buffer
- Pedestrian controlled signal at 87th & 15th has flashing beacon now
- Timing of lights – signal crossing time – need more walking time
- Lack of synchronization on 85th

Ballard

- Build to the corner and the street
- Flexcar use
- Reduce street vehicle speeds
- Get C-zones to incorporate streetscape
- Retail core is Market – 24th to 20th
- Opportunity areas
 - Market – 24th to Locks – industrial land w/ new retail uses
 - Leary – South of Market
 - 56th & 57th – 24th to 20th – lots of parking lots
 - Market – South side, east of Leary – underused commercial
 - Market – 20th to 15th – potential w/monorail
- Pedestrian-friendly needs
- Glass awnings
- Curb-cut limits
- Street furniture
- Bike racks
- Uses offices?
 - Architects/Doctor's offices?
 - More to do w/physical form and uses – want visual – more important than use
 - (Market, 15th, 24th, Leary for restructure)
- Vibrant retail? More offices
- Change dynamic of shoppers/pedestrian
- Key for retail isn't necessarily key for pedestrian-friendly
- Promoting outdoor cafes w/o taking up sidewalk space
- Mixing retail or shops
- Provide for people in immediate area, and a draw for surrounding and even from across town and for day workers
- Windemere?
- Parking codes?

- Tourist center down at Locks – how to tie into downtown Ballard through Industrial zone
- After 15th – large setbacks
- 56th street development instead of development on Market?
- Sidewalk-scape:
 - Wide sidewalk
 - Trees
 - Street furniture
 - Street lighting
- 24th – 17th, Market – 58th
- Mid block pass through incentives
- Ballard Parking Inc. near funeral home – chamber owns part
- Monthly rented – surface parking
- Sidewalk cafes? -- permit clarification – or use in general
- Sandwich boards? – guidelines and placement on sidewalk
- Litter cans placement/pick-up
- Apartment buildings better for long term
- Condos won't have to maintain, sell off
- Public art doesn't help bad design

Magnolia

- Slower auto speeds
- More frequent stops/lights

Westwood/Delridge

- Pedestrian walkways from store to store
- Encourage street-front businesses
- Bank works – smaller retail
- In South Delridge triangle, angled parking packs in cars, can be harmful to pedestrians, because the sidewalks are too narrow
- Wide sidewalks
- For C1-zoned properties (Westwood Village) require clearly visible comfortable pedestrian access from street (not just from lot) through the parking lot & between stores, commensurate with # of access ways for automobiles
- C-zoned properties within urban villages should include residential above retail/commercial uses. Parking usage patterns could be complementary, as could transit usage. These areas should (~~not~~)? feature street frontage requirements similar to P-zones.
- In exchange for liberal uses in NC zones, look at design relationship between street and structure in C-zones. Design that is responsive to peds in addition to cars.
- Pathways that lead the pedestrian from street through lot to stores – businesses out to the street

- Design that relates to street frontage

Other/General Comments

Rainier Beach

- Pedestrian connection between Rainier Beach and St. Sta. along Henderson.
- CPTED review should be part of all project review.
- More pedestrian oriented between Seward Park and 52nd Street.
- Draw more people to anchor store.
- Community center is big draw.
- Concentrate pedestrian areas to encourage working family stores and services.
- Concentrate parking.
- Gateway to connect areas.
- All-way stops at center.
- Residential use at street level along Rainier should be discouraged – public safety.
- Low planting.
- Deciduous trees
- Lighting (downlighting)
- More frequent mid-block crossings.
- Mid-street refuge.
- Central garage to serve business area.

Capitol Hill/First Hill/Queen Anne/Central Area/Eastlake

- Popular restaurants – great parking point. If you are popular, you don't have to offer restaurant parking. People want outside, so you end up with 2 restaurants full of people parked in the neighborhood.
- The Radical Row House Idea – 4 stairs up that most people live in North America.
- Need transition areas of zoning. Can you do something?
- 14th Avenue South
- Random sign types – 1, 2, hr. no parking, etc.
- Madison Park parking problems:
 - Not enough customer parking.
 - Employee parking.
 - Lack of turnover.

Ballard/Greenwood/Magnolia

- Not enough spaces, taking up the small car spaces.
- Let developer choose what size is provided.
- Pedestrian overlay works if there's hidden parking elsewhere. Losing parking spaces as neighborhood develops.
- Overlay can make things better and worse.

- Difficult to get employees' parking.
- Lose business because of parking.
- Reservoirs of parking – available but not accessible because of liability.
Ex: Wilson Ford site.
- Look for incentive to open up parking. Empty spots in parking lots.
- Businesses should validate for parking.
- Incentive from City.
- Have lots of parking lots.
- Safety issues – Won't walk alone at night. No security guards.
- Sense of community.
- Being able to see.
- Monorail is taking things away.
- 15th is a mess – intersection @ 85th is a mess. Monorail is taking away pedestrian friendliness.
- Monorail is 24/7. Need parking. Don't want big cement parking lots. Need more thinking.
- Neighborhood will be one big parking lot.
- Need enforcement for RPZ. Will have to pay for RPZ. Unfair to impose RPZ fees on neighbors. Policy to have traffic generator pay for RPZ.
- Transit-way agreement
- Shop and park idea – get businesses w/lots of parking to allow longer-term parking.
- Neighborhood is a transit stop – not a pedestrian area.
- 15th is a major truck route.
- Regular crossings that are reliable/well-timed.
- Wide sidewalks
- Landscaped buffers
- Art
- Lighting
- Need safety/visibility/light.
- MRP needs to enhance storefronts.
- Traffic circles needed.
- Wide enough sidewalks
- Open space 10' wide. Don't require 10' width arbitrarily.
- Need interesting businesses. Small businesses, individual owner occupiers.
- Consider rezoning block north of 87th to NC zone? Maybe on west side of 15th? It is developing that way.
- Area between 15th & Olympic View north of 85th was multifamily. Consider going back to LDT.
- Modulated is more interesting. Clusters at 85th and 65th make sense.
- Bike racks
- Loud
- Need to be able to cross 15th.
- Businesses in auto-oriented zones are for cars.

- Synchronized lights can help move cars.
- Compact car space regulation (three sizes of spaces within buildings).
- Parking problems – SUV's and mixed-use buildings w/columns everywhere in parking garages.
- Think we need to increase the compact size space dimensions
- Shouldn't the developer be the decider of the size of parking stalls?
- Why not let developer work out the size of stalls?
- Pedestrian overlay district works if there is hidden parking elsewhere. City and communities don't have \$\$ to build new parking
- Majestic Theater (wonderful community asset w/real parking problems) required few parking spaces but lacks parking lots
- Even after MPSW, still lacking parking spaces for employees to park in
- So sometimes P-overlay works well, sometimes exacerbates situation
- People park (illegally) at Ballard WAMU – they don't offer paid parking
- Delicate balance between pedestrian overlay and paid parking even being available
- Customers/employees parking needed
- Customers – people want to park right in front of store
- Employees - need places for people to park
- Vacant bldgs/lots – Could these lots be opened for “temporary” parking, like Wilson Ford site (an ocean of parking)? What incentives could encourage them to open their land? Liability/insurance policy or tax advantage of vacant land for temporary parking
- Need new solutions to make existing parking “go further”
- See lack of short term parking (15 min) vs. high 0-2 hour parking
- We need a parking validation program
- Ballard Square example. Businesses not renewing lease, empty by 2005 because property owner now charging for parking and meters on the street
- Recognize that additional housing in Ballard so that people will be able to walk to business, etc. but there is transition time now
- Parking is very big issue, especially monorail stations. Like the Crown Hill business district dilemmas because 15th Ave. N.W. parking is being removed. Attitude seems like “suck it up or move out.”
- Concerns about Monorail/SMP column placement and other impacts fly in the face of the NBDS visions

Queen Anne

- North Queen Anne should fill out and be continuous retail and restaurants, the potential is there for it to be that someday
- Parking is difficult in residential areas
- Uptown has a lot of new condo/mixed-use development
- Monorail integration

Georgetown

- No real shopping areas
- Some coffee shops
- Small amount residential in Georgetown discourages retail development

Beacon Hill

- Retail needs to stay open later

Madison Miller/Madison Park/Madrona

Judkins Park:

- Many churches in area
- Dense home site development
- BBQ, drug, convenient stores
- Safety issues
- Metro trolley lines
- Maybe needs different zoning analysis

Madrona:

- Retail around all sides of the park.
- More community gathering areas
- Where people don't have to spend \$\$ to hang out with neighbors

Madison Park:

- 49 year hardware store
- Parking location / access / requirement
 - Compact space vs. large cars
 - Do people use underground parking?
 - Encourage Flexcar / cost parking spaces
 - Some parking problems – 19th / Aloha / Kingfish area. No off-street parking.

Madison Area:

- Easier to build large buildings on large sites.
- But creates too sterile environments.
- Planned Parenthood site as not a good model.
- Rt 11 Delays extensive – 45 minute wait going eastbound – bus gets stuck on West Seattle Bridge.